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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 003758
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 R

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DRAFTED BY:NEA/RA:DRMORAN
APPROVED BY:NEA/RA:SEPALMER,JR
----------088428 062212Z /73
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 003758

STADIS//////////////////////////////

FOLLOWING REPEAT TUNIS 9050 ACTION SECSTATE DEC 21

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 9050

STADIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, TS
SUBJ: ACHOUR/BROWN RELATIONSHIP

REF: STATE 300776

1. CURRENT EVIDENCE LEADS US TO AGREE WITH BROWN'S REPORTED ANALYSIS OF ACHOUR'S PRESENT SITUATION. MANY OF ACHOUR'S RECENT TROUBLES WITH GOT ARE INDEED THE FRUITS OF HIS OWN LOOM. EVIDENCE ABOUNDS THAT SOME OF ACHOUR'S ACTIONS RELATE MORE CLOSELY TO HIS PERSONAL AMBITIONS THAN TO THE BROADER INTERESTS OF UGTT MEMBERSHIP. SITUATION IS FURTHER CLUDED BY INDICATIONS THAT SOME UGTT RANK AND FILE ARE NO LONGER MARCHING TO ACHOUR'S DRUM. (EXAMPLE: REPORTED FRICTION
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BETWEEN EDITORIAL STAFF OF UGTT WEEKLY ECH-CHAAB AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, GROWING WILDCATTING IN RAILROADS AND OTHER SECTORS, AND REPUTED GENERATION AND ATTITUDINAL GAPSMPENING BETWEEN UGTT LEADERSHIP AROUND ACHOUR AND UNION'S MID-LEVEL CADRES.)

2. WE KNOW OF NO SERIOUS GOT PLAN TO INITIATE LEGAL ACTION

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AGAINST ACHOUR, BUT IT IS HARDLY A SECRET THAT ACHOURS
RELATIONS WITH GOT (PARTICULARLY PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA AND
PSD PARTY DIRECTOR SAYAH) ARE STRAINED. MOREOVER, AMPLE
PROPAGANDA PRESSURE NOW BEING EXERTED, WITH GOT AND
PARTY EXHORTATIONS FOR "NATIONAL UNITY BY ALL NATIONAG
ORGANIZATIONS" RECEIVING HEAVY PRESS PLAY. WE THINK
ACHOUR MAY HAVE SOUGHT TO USE BROWN'S PERSONAL PRESTIGE
(AND IMPLIED AFL-CIO SUPPORT) IN CONTEXT OF HIS ONGOING
FIGHT WITH GOT, RATHER THAN HAVE BROWN PLAY MEDIATING
ROLE PER SE. TOO, ACHOUR MAY HAVE CALCULATED THAT BROWN
COULD INTERVENE USEFULLY ON HIS BEHALF WITH GOT IN VIEW OF
BROWN'S LONG STANDING CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH BOTH
BOURGUIBA AND NOUIRA.

3. WE HAVE HAD NO COMMUNICATION WITH BROWN SINCE HIS LAST
VISIT TO TUNISIA IN SEPT 77. WE CONSIDER IT TOO EARLY TO
CONCLUDE THAT ACHOUR HAS "LOST CONFIDENCE AND/OR FRIENDSHIP
OF BROWN AND/OR AFL-CIO" AS SUGGESTED IN REFTEL. JUST LAST
MONTH BROWN ALLEGEDLY SENT ACHOUR A TELEGRAM EXPRESSING
PERSONAL SUPPORT AT TIME ACHOUR WAS CLAIMING TO HAVE BEEN
TARGET OF ASSASSINATION PLOT. ALSO, ACHOUR RECENTLY TOLD LABATT
THAT HE HAD SPOKEN WITH BROWN BY TELEPHONE TWO WEEKS AGO DURING
ACHOUR'S TRIP TO ICFTU/BRUSSELS.

4. IN SUM, WE DO NOT THINK QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIPS
BETWEEN BROWN/AFL-CIO AND ACHOUR/UGTT WILL MATERIALLY
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AFFECT INTERNAL POLITICAL DYNAMIC NOW UNFOLDING. WE DO TEND
TOWARD AGREEMENT WITH BROWN THAT THIS IS NOT TIME FOR HIM
OR AFL-CIO TO BECOME INVOLVED DIRECTLY IN WHAT IS ESSENTIALLY
A TUNISIAN DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONFRONTATION WHICH HAS LITTLE,
IF ANYTHING, TO DO WITH BROADER TRADE UNION OR WORKER INTERESTS.
HOWEVER, WE WELCOME AND CONSIDER USEFUL ANY ONGOING COMMUNICATIONS
WHICH MAY EXIST BETWEEN BROWN AND ACHOUR.
MULCAHY
UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE003758
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/RA:DRMORAN
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780011-0221
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780190/aaaacyfh.tel
Line Count: 103
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5d8b01e6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 78 STATE 300776
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 aug 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3815762
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ACHOUR/BROWN RELATIONSHIP
TAGS: ELAB, TS
To: PARIS
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5d8b01e6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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